

HIGHTOWER

"Pilot"

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TEASER

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

GERMANY - 1945

The first grips of spring snake through dense trees. A newly-bloomed patch of WILDFLOWERS poke through the melting snow.

Crouched in a foxhole nearby is FRANK PATAKI (30s, in normal life he's a biologist). Dog tags glint at the neck of his American uniform. In addition to his name and service number the letter H is stamped into the metal.

His sharp eyes dart from the beautiful flowers to his BATTERED NOTEBOOK. He draws with the tiniest nub of a pencil.

We glimpse of the drawing after a moment. It's not the flowers we expect but a RABBIT CORPSE. Rotten, guts spill out. Empty eye sockets. The flowers take root in the death.

Now we see the wildflowers from Frank's view -- his drawing is an exact replica of what's before him. Corpse and all.

Frank labels the drawing with scientific precision. His pencil captures everything.

GUNFIRE rouses him.

Frank replaces the pencil in his hands with a RIFLE.

EXT. FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

The sun rises as AMERICAN SOLDIERS run through the forest. Towards us. Ready for battle. As they move forward we move back -- allowing their faces to linger in our view.

They barely flinch as BOOMING ARTILLERY EXPLODES IN THE DISTANCE.

Frank is in the middle of it. He bears the intense look of someone about to enter a kill-or-be-killed scenario.

EXT. DEATH CAMP - DAY

Frank and his company advance. Rifles at the ready. Staccato GUNSHOTS around them. Rifles PING as they eject empty clips.

We move backwards as Frank marches forward. We see only his REACTIONS to the horrors before him until they're behind him.

He passes through a BARBED WIRE GATE. Emaciated CORPSES of prisoners line the way. Old men and women killed and abandoned by their captors. The horrors of the Holocaust.

One group of prisoners weep as soldiers free them. Some stand in shock with clothing hanging off their skeletal frames.

He passes a group of surrendered Nazi guards being searched at gunpoint. He continues.

Past a BLAZING BONFIRE now. Burning paperwork. An attempt by the Nazis to hide their crimes.

He comes across TRAIN TRACKS. He and his squad sweep through a row of TRAIN CARS.

Frank hesitates before throwing a train car door open. Rifle at the ready. He starts shaking slightly. Military discipline failing to contain his reaction to the utter onslaught of human evil he's seen today.

We swing around to see what he's seeing. Inside the gloom of the train car are STACKS OF CORPSES. Innocent victims stuffed in and left to die.

There are more bodies than Frank can comprehend fading off into the darkness.

And each train car is the same.

A SICKENING CRUNCH brings Frank's attention back to the car in front of him.

Deep in the darkness he sees UNDULATING MOVEMENT.

Something is in there. And it's feeding.

COUNTLESS INSECTOID LEGS CHITTER against the wood of the train car. The shadows hide its true, monstrous size.

*It notices Frank.*

Frank shuts his eyes to the details. Terrified.

GUNSHOTS. A final holdout of guards shoot at the liberators.

Frank opens his eyes. The thing he saw is gone. *Was it ever there to begin with?*

Frank returns fire until a bullet takes him in the leg.

Then DARKNESS.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

NEW JERSEY - 1949

A quaint post-war suburban tableau complete with American flag waving on the flagpole.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Frank writes at the board. The utter speed of it is dizzying as his words loop around some of his detailed chalk drawings. Images of EVOLUTION.

Here's a man used to lecturing at a higher level. A group of harried high schoolers struggle to keep up with their notes.

FRANK

We often equate survival of the fittest with being the best at killing and hunting. But it's really about environmental suitability. Nature values deterrence and hiding. High birth rates. This gives us the variety of life we see today.

He pauses to allow students to catch up.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Would mankind have been the dominant species had we shared the planet with the mighty Tyrannosaurus Rex? And would the dreaded T. Rex dominate our world with significantly less oxygen? Not to mention all our bazookas, tanks, the atom bomb. T. Rex was the king of its environment. And we're the kings of our own.

A CLEAN CUT TEEN raises their hand.

CLEAN CUT TEEN

My father says evolution is blasphemous. There's no room for God in it.

FRANK

The truth doesn't need your  
father's approval to be true.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATER

Frank meticulously erases his detailed notes and graphs.

The PRINCIPAL (50s, soft) enters and leans against the  
teacher's desk.

Frank ignores the Principal and keeps at his chore.

PRINCIPAL

I take it you know why I'm here.

FRANK

It's time for my lesson now.

PRINCIPAL

A lesson you've heard many times  
before. You're here to teach, not  
tell students that their parents  
are wrong.

FRANK

Even when their parents are wrong?

PRINCIPAL

That's not your place to decide.

FRANK

We don't get to decide what's true.  
It just is or it isn't.

PRINCIPAL

Then here's a truth for you: those  
parents will get you fired if you  
continue. This isn't some  
university you *used* to teach at.  
You don't have tenure. I'm barely  
keeping the angry parents at bay.  
And I'm no longer sure why I'm even  
trying to.

FRANK

I teach the truth. Not comfortable  
lies heard in church pews. Pursuit  
of the truth is the most important  
thing a man can do.

## PRINCIPAL

I'm gonna be real honest with you, Frank. You're proof that the pursuit of truth above all else is more trouble than it's worth.

## EXT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A comfortable (if a little shabby) triplex in the middle of urban mid-century New Jersey.

A dark sedan pulls up front and spits out two G-MEN IN MATCHING SUITS.

## INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is sparse and small, that of a bachelor.

Frank sits alone surrounded by scholastic degrees and accolades covered in dust. Part of an old life.

His dinner is the BOTTLE OF BRANDY and the GLASS in front of him. He listens to the radio. Mind a million miles away.

He hears a KNOCK AT THE FRONT DOOR. He turns the radio off. *Who would it be at this time of night?*

He opens the door and sees the G-Men. The tall one, SMITH, flashes a badge. The shorter one is CROSS.

## SMITH

I'm Smith and he's Cross, War Department. We'd like to have a word with you.

Frank motions them in and closes the door behind them.

## SMITH (CONT'D)

We're sorry to bother you at home, Dr. Pataki.

## FRANK

Call me Frank.

## SMITH

We understand you served in Europe during the War.

## FRANK

That's correct.

SMITH

We're here because your country again requires your service.

FRANK

There a war happening that I don't know about?

Frank isn't comforted by how they thoroughly ignore his joking question.

CROSS

We've read your research what little we could understand is of interest to us.

FRANK

That was another life.

SMITH

All the same, we're creating a symposium of scientists across different disciplines to discuss issues that affect our nation--

CROSS

--And we think your insight could prove invaluable to your country.

FRANK

If you're familiar with my research then you know you don't want me. You want Wilkes, Chilton, or Bonham.

SMITH

They're already on board. Along with Murray, Brown, Adler and what's-his-name? The French-sounding one?

CROSS

Poitier.

SMITH

Yeah Poitier. We've recruited the best of the best. And our boss, Dr. Hauser wants you in this thing too.

The name *Hauser* invokes deep feelings in Frank.

FRANK

Dr. Hauser's really involved?

SMITH  
He recommended you.

FRANK  
I have trouble believing that.

CROSS  
We wouldn't be here otherwise.

FRANK  
Look, I'm sorry gentlemen. I don't  
want anything to do with this.

SMITH  
Dr. Pataki, I think you're under  
the impression that this was a  
situation where we needed to ask  
your permission.

#### **BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE**

Frank stands before the train car in the Camp. He heaves the door open.

But it's empty. Frank steps inside and into--

A BLINDING WHITE SPACE. His eyes adjust to make out a SNOWFIELD. The ground barely distinguishable from the sky.

Surrounding him are FROZEN FIGURES. People reaching out in pain and terror. Reaching out to him. Encased in ice. The WIND HOWLS through them.

Then he's in DARKNESS. The wind replaced with the CHITTERING, INSECT NOISES that still chills him to the core. Moisture flits through the air as if he's in a JUNGLE or CAVE.

The frozen figures still surround him but they're no longer ice, but stone.

They vibrate. Cracks run up them and chips of stone fall off. Frank backs up as they start to move. Reaching out towards him with stone fingers beginning to curl.

#### **END DREAM SEQUENCE**

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank wakes up in his own bed, disturbed. He touches his face. Wet with tears.

His hands shake slightly.



EXT. NJ TRAIN STATION - DAY

Frank waits as a train pulls into the station and the doors open, ready for boarding.

He turns and stares at the open train car for just a moment.

Does he see a SHADOW in the doorway or is it just his imagination?

He blinks and it's gone. He boards the train.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The train moves along as New Jersey turns into New York. Past the City with its brick and metal behemoths.

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN CAR - DAY

Frank stares out the window as things turn more rural, then finally, remote.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Frank steps off the platform in the middle of nowhere and sees Smith and Cross standing in front of their sedan.

EXT. ROADS - DAY

The car winds through shaded forest roads.

EXT. CAMP ADAM - DAY

The car pulls up to a fenced military checkpoint.

INT. CAR - DAY

Frank can see giant RADAR EMPLACEMENTS in the distance.

Smith and Cross hand their identification to the guards.

FRANK  
Where are we?

CROSS  
Camp Adam.

SMITH

As far as the rest of the world  
knows, this place doesn't exist.

EXT. CAMP ADAM - DAY

Frank and his handlers approach an unassuming building in the midst of rows of identical ones. Armed Military Police at every corner.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The drab room is filled with two dozen SCIENTISTS and lined with AGENTS IN DARK SUITS. Frank recognizes many of the faces here. The cream of the scientific crop.

They gather around platters of cold cuts and finger foods along with a drink cart.

Yet Frank stands alone in this crowd of luminaries in tweed. He ignores the pointed looks and WHISPERS in his direction.

Finally he gives in and goes to the cart to pour himself a cognac. There he bumps into DR. CHARLES WILKES (50s, arrogant). Neither of them are pleased by this.

DR. WILKES

Frank.

FRANK

Charles. It's been a while.

DR. WILKES

Yes. How have you been?

FRANK

Great. Still at Harvard?

DR. WILKES

They'll have to carry me out of there in a pine box. Where are you teaching these days?

FRANK

Patterson High.

DR. WILKES

Oh...

Frank is thankful the awkwardness is cut short when the door opens and in comes COLONEL CARTWRIGHT (50s, stern) and DR. HAUSER (70s, saintly, unreadable). There's a Sunday morning reverence this group has when they see Hauser.

Frank's face reads somewhere between respect and contempt at seeing Dr. Hauser. A long, shared history between them.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT  
Greetings. The War Department  
thanks you for coming. You  
represent the best and brightest  
scientific minds this nation has to  
offer. I'll honor your valuable  
time by getting down to brass  
tacks. We'll take you aside one by  
one for a chat with Dr. Hauser.

Hauser stares coolly at the group. Frank feels Hauser's gaze pass over him.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT (CONT'D)  
What transpires here today is top  
secret. I'm sorry I cannot be more  
forthcoming at this time, the fate  
of the world could be at stake.

The scientists chuckle. Cartwright and Hauser do not.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT (CONT'D)  
If you'd come with us, Dr. Wilkes.  
The rest of you, please enjoy the  
refreshments graciously provided by  
the U.S. taxpayer as you wait.

Cartwright and Hauser lead Dr. Wilkes out.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Hours have passed. The once full room has dwindled.

Frank itches to refill his glass. Everyone left still avoids him like the plague.

Cartwright enters. And another scientist leaves with him.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Frank's annoyed at being the last one left in the room. The door opens and instead of the Colonel, in walks Dr. Hauser.

DR. HAUSER  
Come with me Frank.

The two men share a guarded look. But Frank does get up to follow Dr. Hauser out.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY

A beam of projector light pierces the darkness and the assembled chairs. The only people in the room when Hauser leads Frank in are Cartwright and a projectionist.

FRANK  
What's this all about?

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT  
I want you to tell me what you see.

FRANK  
Excuse me?

DR. HAUSER  
Trust me, Frank. Like old times.  
This will be worth it.

Frank weighs this then begrudgingly sits.

The projectionist starts up the reel.

It shows WRITHING SEGMENTED LEGS rhythmically swaying. Then it gets more clear. It looks like a CENTIPEDE darting back and forth on a metal slab.

It's EERIE. The short clip has been duplicated so it plays over and over in a loop, creating an almost hypnotic effect.

Frank stares at the film, taking in every detail. Sweat on his brow. *He knows what this is and it's bringing him right back to the worst moment of his life.*

Frank snaps out of it when the film ends. He looks to see that both Hauser and Cartwright are staring at him.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT  
So what did you see?

FRANK  
Where was this footage obtained?

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT  
I cannot reveal that.

Frank considers the film for a second.

FRANK

What's the scale we're seeing here?

DR. HAUSER

A good question. Continue.

Frank snaps into analysis mode.

FRANK

It's obviously some sort of centipede. But the key identifying factor I notice here is the flatness of the thoracic segments and how the carapace rises to meet the leg joints. That's not something we see in modern centipedes or millipedes. So it could very well be a previously unknown species.

(knows this sounds crazy)

However, that exact structure has been observed in fossils found in Scotland of an ancient creature known as Arthropleura.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT

How old are these fossils? A million years old? Two million?

FRANK

Try three hundred million.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT

You're telling me you just watched a film strip of a three hundred million year old insect?

FRANK

I'm telling you my observations and any conclusions I can draw from them based on limited information.

DR. HAUSER

Could this be the same thing you observed in Germany?

The question hangs in the air for a moment.

FRANK

Nobody believes what I saw in Germany. And talking about it got my academic reputation destroyed. By you.

Hauser nods to the projectionist, who switches the reel and starts the new one.

Frank watches as the same clip from earlier starts to play. But then it rapidly moves to NEW FOOTAGE.

Now Frank watches as one of the creatures, indeed the Arthropleura writhes in a LARGE CAGE. It pours over itself in a rage trying to escape. It's massive.

Even more massive when an unseen hand lays a YARDSTICK next to a DEAD SPECIMEN. It's easily over ten feet long.

Finally, the film ends with anonymous SCIENTISTS in coats holding up the dead specimen. It takes three of them to hold up this glimpse into the PERMIAN ERA.

Frank tries to take in the proof staring him in the face.

DR. HAUSER

I ask again: could this be what you saw in Germany?

FRANK

Yes.

DR. HAUSER

You're a slave to the truth. You follow it no matter where it leads. You believed what you saw in Germany despite what everyone told you. Despite what I told you.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT

Nazis made that thing. We don't know the how or the why. But we want to find out. We're starting a secret research initiative to recover lost Nazi science.

DR. HAUSER

We found the lab where this thing came from. It's abandoned, but it's very difficult to reach.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT

We're organizing an expedition complete with cover story. We need someone who can take charge and tell my men what's important to recover and what's not.

DR. HAUSER

And we want that to be you.

Frank couldn't be more surprised by this.

FRANK

Why me?

DR. HAUSER

Because you were the only one who could see what was actually there. Let's work together again, for old times' sake.

FRANK

I want nothing to do with this. That *thing* already ruined my life once. People like you ruined my career. I owe you nothing.

DR. HAUSER

Forget about me then. Don't you want to know the *truth*?

Frank very much does. And the other two men sense it.

COLONEL CARTWRIGHT

So how about it, are you in?

FRANK

Of course I am.

And off Frank, determined and in over his head--

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - NIGHT

France - 1944

A breeze threatening to become something greater whispers through tall grass and taller pines.

There's a calmness that's interrupted by the WHOOSH and BLINDING LIGHT of a handheld FLARE being lit.

It's held by HELENA CORK (30s, American, intimidating, impossibly clever). The red light washes over her determined face. But despite its hardness exhaustion eats at the edges.

Other flares are lit by men standing in the darkness. They're gaunt, hungry, haggard, and intense. They drop their flares and walk from the clearing to the tree line.

Helena can barely make out the far-off whir of PROPELLERS. She smiles at this. A small victory.

The flares form an ARROW. Helena stands at its base.

The plane gets louder. A moment later she can barely spot the distant silhouetted DOUGLAS C-47.

It ZOOMS by until it's swallowed back up by the darkness.

TINY WHITE SPECKS appear in the sky after it passes.

The specks bloom into PARACHUTES.

They drift lazily down until GIANT PALLETS hit the ground.

The men burst from the forest shouting in FRENCH.

Helena yells orders at them in French and they spring into action. Crates get unpacked. Then torn apart. The silk parachutes get folded into impossibly small packages.

*When they're done working it'll look like nothing at all happened this night in this clearing.*

Helena pries a crate open. Inside is a PORTABLE RADIO TRANSMITTER. She's a kid on Christmas.

CLAUDIA (20s, local French Resistance) calls Helena over to another crate.

It's packed with EXPLOSIVES.



EXT. VILLAGE STREETS - DAY

A BLACK RADIO DETECTOR VAN idles on the quaint cobblestones. These are a key piece of the Nazi oppression over the Resistance. A RADIO OPERATIVE works inside to triangulate French transmissions. TWO GESTAPO lean against the van, smoking in their leather coats.

Helena crawls out from under the idling vehicle without being noticed. She dashes to an alley where Claudia waits for her.

They check their watches. Counting down until...

BOOM! THE VAN EXPLODES INTO A FIREBALL.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Helena perches over the portable radio and listens for coded instructions from far-off London. Claudia and other Resistance members crowd around her.

A POUNDING THUMP ON THE BASEMENT DOOR.

WHEELS SCREECH OUTSIDE FOLLOWED BY BOOTS HITTING THE GROUND.

Everyone rushes to escape. Helena packs away the transmitter. She's extremely careful with the priceless equipment despite her urgency. She hides it behind loose bricks in the wall.

Claudia rips some boards down to reveal a high basement window. She hops up and pries it open.

Once she's through she holds out a hand for Helena. Claudia pulls Helena through just as a SEA OF ARMED GESTAPO swarm into the basement. They shoot at the window.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DAY

Helena and Claudia run through a winding maze. Gestapo hot on their heels.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

They've been running for hours. One step ahead of patrols.

The doorway hidden is in shadows. The owners fled or dead.

Helena pulls out LOCK PICKING TOOLS and breaks in.

INT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

Helena and Claudia change into clothes found in the house.

Helena sneaks a look over at Claudia and is surprised to see Claudia checking her out in return.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAWN

The two women walk apart in their new disguises, trying to avoid suspicion and act calm as they flee the city.

...Until Helena is TACKLED to the ground by Gestapo. Blood spurts from her nose.

Claudia hesitates. Calculates the odds.

HELENA  
(in French)  
Go! Run!

Claudia nods, a tear in her eye, and runs off.

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

Helena is chained in the damp darkness. In the dim light it's hard to see the beating she's getting, but we can hear it.

As the beating continues we start to hear the CLACKING OF A TYPEWRITER mixed in. It becomes LOUDER and LOUDER.

CUT TO:

INT. CIA OFFICE - DAY

WASHINGTON DC - 1949

The clacking cacophony continues in this busy OFFICE.

This is the CIA in its infancy, when it was still stationed across several buildings in DC itself.

Runners with messages wind through rows of secretaries.

Helena sits among the secretaries. Despite her status as an AGENT, her place in the hierarchy has been made clear.

She types away at a report. Memories of the war flit through her head as she stabs at each key. DING. The end of a line.

Then WHAM -- a stack of papers drops onto her desk from AGENT STEVENS (30s, has an extremely punchable face).

STEVENS

Got these next for you, doll.

HELENA

I'm not your secretary.

Stevens walks away before giving her another smile that is more in line with a middle finger. Helena grinds her teeth.

There's a rustle of blinds from the corner office. Her boss DEPUTY DIRECTOR MOORE (50s) gesture for her from inside.

INT. MOORE'S OFFICE - DAY

Helena enters the cluttered office. Moore is an imposing figure although he looks more like a cowboy than an intelligence officer.

MOORE

Stevens giving you his reports to file again?

HELENA

I'm an agent, same as him. I'm not his secretary.

MOORE

Don't be a fly in the ointment, Helena. He's being groomed for a big op. It would be prudent to get on his good side.

It kills her, but:

HELENA

Yes, sir.

MOORE

Your request for the Argentina post has been denied.

HELENA

But I have more field experience than any agent here.

(off Moore's look)

Any agent other than you of course. I was slitting Nazi throats while half these people were in diapers. I should be out there.

MOORE

I know you're frustrated.

HELENA

That's putting it mildly sir.

MOORE

That's why I put your name forward for a different assignment. It's a garbage babysitting job. Nobody else wants it. But it might be your last shot at getting back in the field.

A fire lights in Helena's eyes at the opportunity.

HELENA

I'll take it.

MOORE

You'll report to the psy-ops department tomorrow. One of their agents, a man named Blake, needs a handler for his first field assignment.

HELENA

Sir?

MOORE

You want the job or not?

HELENA

Of course I do.

MOORE

I knew you would. Now get out.

Helena turns to leave.

MOORE (CONT'D)

One more thing.

HELENA

Yes?

MOORE

How many Nazi throats did you slit?

HELENA

A lady never tells.

EXT. HELENA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Helena walks through a bustling post-war DC.

Helena climbs the steps to her building and fumbles with the key. She ignores the strange looks from neighbors.

INT. HELENA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

A cramped yet homey room. Claudia deftly handles multiple steaming pots and pans.

Helena sets the table for two.

HELENA

I was offered a field position.

Claudia nearly drops a pan in surprise.

CLAUDIA

This calls for wine of course.

She fishes around for a bottle of Bordeaux and a corkscrew.

HELENA

You think everything calls for wine.

CLAUDIA

And am I ever wrong?

Helena reaches around Claudia's waist to grab the wine. She opens the bottle and pours two glasses.

They stand face-to-face in the cramped kitchen.

HELENA

It's a nothing assignment, really.

CLAUDIA

You've wanted it for so long.

HELENA

Yes...

Through this their bodies grow closer. Claudia runs fingers across SCARS on Helena's arms. Reminders of her imprisonment.

CLAUDIA

You'd better come back to me alive.

HELENA

I always do.

Claudia leans in. Helena's eyes dart to the open window through which other kitchens in other apartments can be seen.

She reaches out and closes the curtains. Now that they're alone and nobody can see them, Helena matches Claudia's intimate body language.

They kiss. Wine and dinner forgotten in the moment.

EXT. WASHINGTON DC STREETS - DAY

Helena walks through the rapidly-growing city. Mind rushing along with the foot traffic.

INT. INCOGNITO CIA LOBBY - DAY

Helena waits as security calls her through. She makes her way to the elevators.

INT. BLAKE'S OFFICE - DAY

Helena feels like she's stepped into a history museum. The room is stuffed with ARTIFACTS, OCCULT ITEMS, and IDOLS from around the world.

Sitting in the middle of it all is JACOB BLAKE (40s, devilishly handsome). He belongs amidst these images of gods.

BLAKE

Agent Cork, I presume.

HELENA

Did the stars tell you that one?

Blake smiles. He's heard every joke in the book.

BLAKE

I take it this wasn't your first choice for an assignment.

HELENA

On the contrary, I'm the only one who was willing to take the job.

BLAKE

What do you know about the CIA's psy-ops program?

HELENA

You're a bunch of carnival psychics and hucksters.

Helena's openness delights Blake.

BLAKE

To the point. I like that. Would you like to know our mission?

HELENA

I would.

BLAKE

There's a research expedition heading to Antarctica. For some reason every military branch and intelligence agency is sending representatives on this scientific expedition.

HELENA

Sounds like a cover story to me.

BLAKE

That's exactly what I thought.

HELENA

But why do you want to go to on a secret mission to Antarctica?

BLAKE

We've discovered troubling psychic phenomena occurring at the South Pole. And I want to study it.

HELENA

Really?

BLAKE

Really.

HELENA

And how did you find out about this secret expedition?

BLAKE

That one the stars did tell me.

EXT. DOCKS - NIGHT

A SMALL FREIGHTER is the center of hustle and bustle despite the late hour. Sailors prepare the ship for departure.

Three men approach the gangway. Frank with his two handlers: Smith and Cross, barely recognizable without their suits.

The three men make their way up the gangway.

EXT. FREIGHTER MAIN DECK - NIGHT

Waiting for them is Helena and Blake, dressed for field work.

HELENA

Welcome aboard gentlemen. If you don't mind, it's time we set off if we're to make the rendezvous.

FRANK

What rendezvous?

HELENA

You'll see.

The ship's horn BLOWS.

EXT. OPEN OCEAN - NIGHT

Blackness swallows everything. The freighter's lights are mere pinpricks as the ship cuts through the water.

Frank stands on deck sketching in his notebook. He stares into the deep darkness.

It takes him, and us, a moment to realize that Helena's been watching him from the shadows. She's not exactly hiding, but she wasn't making herself known either.

Helena stabs out her cigarette and flicks it overboard. She makes her way to the entrance belowdecks. Light and warmth from inside pours over her as she heads in.

Leaving Frank alone with the immensity of his thoughts.

INT. FREIGHTER BUNK - MORNING

A KNOCK wakes Frank up.

SMITH (O.S.)

We're here.

EXT. FREIGHTER MAIN DECK - MORNING

Frank struggles to pull a sweater on. The sun has just crested the waves.

Smith and Cross gesture him over to the railing.



Sunlight off the water blinds Frank momentarily until he spots it. A NAVY DESTROYER.

FRANK

I hope that's one of ours.

SMITH

They are.

Frank can now see other glimmers of light reflected above the water. More ships.

FRANK

There's a whole fleet out there.

CROSS

You didn't expect us to take this tiny little boat all the way to Antarctica, did you?

Helena and Blake join them in watching the fleet.

There are 15 ships, everything from DESTROYERS to ICE-BREAKERS, SUPPLY SHIPS, SEAPLANE TENDERS, to a COMMAND SHIP with its communication towers. In the middle of it all is an impressively huge AIRCRAFT CARRIER. The best and deadliest the US NAVY has to offer.

HELENA

It's a battle group.

And they're all headed to the bottom of the world.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE**

EXT. NJ TRAIN STATION - DAY

Frank stands on the platform in his hometown.

What comes down the tracks and pulls into the station puts Frank into a state of horror: it's one of the DEATH CAMP TRAINS that carried thousands to their deaths.

It CREAKS and GROANS as it settles to a stop.

The door on the side swings open, revealing--

Blake standing in the middle of the train car. A snake wraps around Blake's head like a crown, but Blake doesn't notice.

Blake gestures for Frank to enter.

As soon as Frank crosses the threshold he --

EXT. WHITEOUT - DAY

--Stands in stark white nothing. Wind HOWLS AROUND HIM.

Frank is surprised when something hits his cheek. He wipes it and checks his finger. It's SNOW or ASH. It swirls around on the wind.

He looks around and notices the FROZEN FIGURES, twisted in agony, reaching out for relief. He flinches away from them but when he turns --

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

--He's gone from light to dark, from freezing to hot and humid.

The figures have again transformed from ice to STONE. INSECTS SCREAM through the mist.

Cracks run through the stone figures, revealing FLESH BENEATH. THE FIGURES START TO MOVE...

**END DREAM SEQUENCE**

INT. SHIP'S MESS - DAY

THREE WEEKS LATER

Frank sits with a tray of chow, trying to shake the memory of the nightmare. Blake and Helena settle in across from him. Frank nods but doesn't engage.

HELENA  
Morning sunshine.

BLAKE  
Bad dreams?

FRANK  
Yeah.

BLAKE  
Me too. I dreamed about snakes. I can't stand snakes.

This catches Frank's attention.

HELENA  
Are you going to tell me today?

Frank plays dumb.

FRANK  
Tell you what?

HELENA  
Why you're going to Antarctica.

FRANK  
You ask me every day when you should be asking your friend Blake.

HELENA  
Shockingly the psychic has been no help in figuring this out.

BLAKE  
I have the good sense to not stick my nose where it doesn't belong.

HELENA  
That's rich coming from an intelligence agent.  
(to Frank)  
So?

The rapport between the three has grown over the past weeks.

FRANK

My answer is the same as yesterday.  
I'm a scientist. I'm here for  
research purposes.

HELENA

Scientists don't have federal  
agents tailing them at all times.

Frank glances to the other side of the mess hall where Smith  
and Cross eat their breakfast.

FRANK

Okay. You want the truth? Do you  
believe in monsters? The war  
created monsters. I make sure that  
nobody ever makes monsters again.

HELENA

That's where you're wrong.

FRANK

Oh yeah?

HELENA

The war didn't create the monsters,  
it just revealed the monsters that  
were always around us.

Before Frank can answer, she's out of the mess hall.

FRANK

She's in a hurry.

BLAKE

Her daily exercise in futility.

INT. SHIP'S BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Helena sits quietly, expectantly, and alone.

After a moment four CIA agents file in. Agent Stevens takes a  
place at the front of the room. They all smile when they see  
Helena already there -- an inside joke.

STEVENS

Since we all seem to be here, let's  
begin the morning briefing. Agent  
Cork, do you care to update us on  
your assignment?

She knows she's being made fun of, but she's professional.

HELENA

I remain in daily contact with Agent Blake. We run exercises meant to hone his psychic mind.

STEVENS

Is that all?

HELENA

Yes sir.

STEVENS

You're dismissed for the day.

CHUCKLES around the room. Helena is tired of this daily humiliation.

HELENA

I can be helpful you know. A good leader would recognize that.

From the temperature of the room, it feels like the first time she's ever talked back.

STEVENS

I was reading your file Agent Cork. You did a lot in France with the Resistance. But then you were captured, right?

HELENA

That's correct.

STEVENS

You were a spy, captured by the Nazis. Normally they'd torture a spy for information and then kill him. Why did the Nazis let you go?

HELENA

They didn't let me go. I escaped.

STEVENS

Maybe you gave something up. Maybe they turned you.

Helena can't tell if Stevens is truly unconvinced or if he's just being an asshole. But it gets under her skin regardless.

## STEVENS (CONT'D)

You can go now, Agent Cork. In fact, don't feel the need to report in again until Agent Blake can divine some winning horses for when we get back.

The other agents in the room give her side-eye. The tension and embarrassment palpable.

Helena gathers her dignity. As she leaves the room she avoids meeting anyone's gaze, but she feels the weight of each and every eye on her.

## INT. SHIP'S CORRIDOR - DAY

Even through the heavy metal door and bulkheads she can hear Stevens and the other CIA agents LAUGHING.

She takes a moment to herself before marching down the corridor. She climbs the steep stairs upward.

## EXT. YANKTON MAIN DECK - DAY

Seamen hustle about their business. They shout to each other as they work. But one thing is for certain, they're definitely avoiding her.

We're aboard the USS YANKTON - a supply ship.

Spread around the Yankton is the rest of the fleet.

Helena sees the command ship, USS OLYMPIAN with its radar and communication towers. Beyond it she can see the huge hulking might of the fleet's aircraft carrier: the USS LAKE HURON.

Beside her a KLAXON BLARES as large hold doors open in the deck. She watches a CRANE deposit a large crate into the hold below. A modern marvel of engineering.

## INT. HOLD - DAY

Frank watches the crane lower the crate among rows of cold-weather vehicles packed into the hold like sardines.

Directing things is SEAMAN SAMUEL DONALDSON (20s, sardonic, and Black during a time where desegregation was the official rule, but largely opposed by military leaders).

DONALDSON

Keep going, keep going!

The crate touches down with the grace of a ballerina.

DONALDSON (CONT'D)

There we go!

He unties the crate's straps as Frank approaches.

DONALDSON (CONT'D)

It's nearly 10 o'clock. I thought I might miss out on your daily visit.

FRANK

I can't pass up on the opportunity to talk to the only person who gives a shit about my mission.

DONALDSON

I only give a shit because it's my job to give a shit.

FRANK

That's good enough for me.

Donaldson wipes grease from his hands.

DONALDSON

Well then let's go take a look.

INT. MAKESHIFT LAB - DAY

A large section of the hold has been cordoned off and filled with LARGE CAGES welded together from available materials.

Alongside those are shelves filled with enough scientific equipment to bankrupt a small college.

DONALDSON

It would've been nice to have been at port when some of these requests came in instead of jury-rigging them on the fly.

Frank inspects the cages.

FRANK

You did great. How much weight can these sustain?

DONALDSON

Their stress tolerance should be pretty high, but I wasn't aware Antarctica was known for its wildlife.

FRANK

It's not.

DONALDSON

Well if you're not gonna give me at least a hint as to what these cages are for, you'll have to excuse me. I have to fire up those vehicles over there.

Frank eyes the giant diesel engines of the cold weather vehicles.

FRANK

In the middle of the hold?

DONALDSON

Yes sir, diesel engines get real temperamental in the cold. Some of those things are gonna run from now until we get back.

FRANK

Straight through?

DONALDSON

You bet. Even an Antarctic summer is too cold for these babies.

FRANK

All that extra exhaust won't be good for the lab.

DONALDSON

I'll see if I can brainstorm some workarounds.

FRANK

I appreciate it.

INT. BLAKE'S BUNK - DAY

Blake and Helena sit in the cramped quarters Blake shares with junior officers. The door remains open and sailors go by about their business.

Helena shuffles a deck of cards and holds one up, face towards her. Three of hearts.

Blake concentrates on the card.

BLAKE

Three of...diamonds?



Wrong. Helena shows him the card. He sighs.

HELENA  
You're off today.

BLAKE  
I know.

HELENA  
Even if you were just guessing at random you'd still statistically get a couple right by now.

BLAKE  
Maybe I can spin my statistically improbable level of failure into a positive at my next budget appraisal.

HELENA  
At least you still know how to talk lawmakers out of taxpayer money. What's wrong today?

BLAKE  
I don't know how to explain it. It's like pressure building in my head. A constant buzzing I can't get rid of. The closer we get the Antarctica, the worse it gets.

HELENA  
That just sounds like a hangover.

BLAKE  
A psychic hangover, maybe.

Helena shuffles and pulls a new card. It's the THREE OF HEARTS AGAIN.

Blake thinks for a moment.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
King of clubs?

HELENA  
Not even close.

But this time she doesn't show him the card. Blake is frustrated. Helena enjoys putting him in his place.

She catches the eye of a sailor outside the door pretending to work but really watching them. Once he realizes he's caught he scurries off.

HELENA (CONT'D)

Another fan.

Blake gestures to the OCCULT PARAPHERNALIA scattered around the quarters.

BLAKE

Sailors can be superstitious. They don't know if I'm a good omen or a portent of doom.

HELENA

But you also like the attention.

BLAKE

Cultivating an air of mystique is part of the job.

Helena watches a SWAYING BRASS PENDULUM over his bunk.

HELENA

I still can't tell if you're a true believer or not.

BLAKE

There's another one like that in the psy-ops office. Dipped in ink. It swings over a giant map, sometimes touching a spot. We investigate any place that gets marked twice.

HELENA

Any luck?

BLAKE

A certain South American office owes much of their success to us. I believe there's a lot more to this universe than we can explain and it's foolish to think we have all the answers. A thousand years ago what we call science was called magic. I wonder what we call superstition today will be called in another thousand.

Helena is surprised to find the argument convincing.

HELENA

Vague enough to cover your bases.

BLAKE

I truly believe. But it doesn't hurt to look like a mad wizard when Uncle Sam wants to fund mad wizards.

HELENA

You must be a sight at appropriations meetings.

BLAKE

I know how to turn on the charm. Which you'll see me do to the good Admiral at tonight's dinner.

HELENA

My invitation was lost in the mail.

BLAKE

Ah, Agent Stevens strikes again.

HELENA

Not my biggest fan.

BLAKE

Hit me again.

Helena shuffles and pulls. THREE OF HEARTS. Again. Blake considers the card for a moment. He's really trying.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Three of hearts.

Helena looks to the card that's come up three times now. She lays it face up in front of him.

HELENA

Guess your luck was bound to turn sometime.

EXT. WIDE OCEAN - EVENING

Light reflects off the cold water and colder steel of the gathered fleet.

INT. BLAKE'S BUNK - EVENING

Blake sits alone, shuffling the deck of cards. The three of hearts keeps on coming out on top. Curious.

He rubs his still-aching head. A DRONING BUZZ builds.

With a sigh he sets a METRONOME in motion and takes out a LARGE PAD OF PAPER, along with a PENCIL.

He ties a BLINDFOLD over his eyes. Each move filled with ritualistic precision.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

He calms and settles himself. Controls his breathing until his posture changes. He's in a trance-like state.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

Without looking, he drags the pencil across the pages in rhythmic, circular motions. This is called automatic writing.

One hand keeps scribbling while the other expertly flips the pages as they fill.

BLAKE

What are you trying to show me?

*Do we hear a deep bass rumble in reply or do we imagine it?*

The pain in his head grows worse. His hand movements also grow more jerky instead of the fluid motion he started with. Sweat builds at his brow.

Finally it's too much and he stops. The metronome CLICKS on.

Blake tears off the blindfold and flips through the pad. Nothing but swirled pencil marks.

As he gets towards the end and the writing changes. It looks like it could be writing in some alphabet from somewhere...but not in any language we recognize.

Between all the strange letters are two repeating words in English: HIGHTOWER. THULE. HIGHTOWER. THULE.

Off Blake's face as he tries to make sense of it.

EXT. THE OLYMPIAN - NIGHT

The flagship of the fleet lit up by deck lights and the stars above.

INT. OLYMPIAN'S OFFICER MESS - NIGHT

While the room is as cramped as any aboard a ship it's definitely the most ostentatious.

Genial conversations take place among officers and agents as Stevens, Frank, and Blake finish the best meal they've eaten in months.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM (60s, a renowned explorer who has lost his edge) sits in the center of it all with the Olympian's CAPTAIN NEEDHA (50s, second fiddle on his own ship).

The Admiral lifts his glass in a toast.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM

On the eve of reaching the Antarctic coast I am reminded of the generations of intrepid Americans who subjugated the wilds of the West. May we be remembered alongside them.

Blake catches Frank's eye: *can you get a load of this guy?*

Regular sailors come in to serve brandy.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM (CONT'D)

I'd love to hear some of your war stories, Agent Stevens. Spy stories are always the best.

STEVENS

Well I--

ADMIRAL FORDHAM

--They can't all be classified.

STEVENS

I didn't get the chance to serve.

The implications of someone his age not serving is felt by everyone in the room. Stevens knows his stock has fallen.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM

And you, Frank, did they let scientists serve?

FRANK

I got the ole tour of Europe.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM

And what did you see?

FRANK

Too much.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM  
(flippantly)  
Yes, the horrors of war.

Blake feels the urge to stir the pot.

BLAKE  
Agent Cork has the best war  
stories.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM  
Agent Cork?

CAPTAIN NEEDHA  
The woman.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM  
Ah yes. Was she a nurse?

BLAKE  
OSS. Embedded in a French  
Resistance outfit. After the  
Normandy landing she scuttled rail  
lines so Jerry couldn't  
counterattack.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM  
I can only imagine what a man like  
Stevens could've achieved given the  
same opportunity.

Blake's taken aback. Is this guy serious?

EXT. THE FLEET - DAY

The fleet finally has the stark white ice shelves of  
Antarctica in sight.

INT. OLYMPIAN BRIDGE - DAY

Fordham and Needha view the distant coast through binoculars.

CAPTAIN NEEDHA  
Squall conditions are forming over  
the continent. We should scrap the  
reconnaissance flight.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM  
No. Only the courageous hand grasps  
glory. I've seen storms like this  
before. It'll pass.

EXT. SEAPLANE TENDER AFT DECK - DAY

Frank stands on the unfamiliar ship and watches as crew rush around the SEAPLANE that takes up the bulk of the deck.

The plane is hooked up to one of the ship's two CRANES.

Smith and Cross approach in flight suits. They look uneasy while Frank looks invigorated.

FRANK  
Good morning gentlemen.

SMITH  
Nothing good about it.

Frank smiles and claps the two queasy men on the back.

FRANK  
Come on, this is the whole reason  
we're here.

Frank falls in behind the SEAPLANE PILOT and CO-PILOT as they board the seaplane.

INT. SEAPLANE MAIN CABIN - DAY

Frank and his handlers strap in as the pilots finish checks.

SEAPLANE PILOT  
We're good to go.

Then the plane LURCHES as the crane lifts them. Frank watches the ship's deck slide away and disappear.

EXT. SEAPLANE TENDER AFT DECK - DAY

The seaplane in motion evokes awe.

INT. OLYMPIAN BRIDGE - DAY

Admiral Fordham and Captain Needha watch the crane deposit the seaplane safely onto the water.

INT. SEAPLANE MAIN CABIN - DAY

The plane rocks and sways as it settles onto the water.

Frank hears the crane disconnect. Smith and Cross look like they might throw up at any second.

Then there's a MECHANICAL ROAR as the plane's two 1600 horsepower engines fire up.

INT. OLYMPIAN BRIDGE - DAY

The bridge crew watches the seaplane position for takeoff before it LEAPS forward across the water as soon as its propellers are engaged.

INT. SEAPLANE MAIN CABIN - DAY

The plane SHUDDERS as it skips across the water, fighting against gravity.

EXT. SEAPLANE - DAY

The plane hops a wave once, twice, then leaves the water entirely.

It rises before banking towards GIANT ICE CLIFFS.

INT. SEAPLANE MAIN CABIN - DAY

Frank knows somewhere out there is the greatest scientific discovery of his life.

INT. OLYMPIAN BRIDGE - DAY

Fordham watches the plane through binoculars. It's already barely a speck through the lenses.

CHATTER below him. Needha consults with a RADAR TECHNICIAN.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM  
What is it?

RADAR TECHNICIAN  
Sir, we've got a radar hit on approach.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM  
Is it one of ours?

RADAR TECHNICIAN  
No chance of that, sir.

CAPTAIN NEEDHA  
We're attempting to radio it now.



ADMIRAL FORDHAM

Speed?

CAPTAIN NEEDHA

Too slow to be under active power,  
but too fast to be natural. I think  
it might be drifting.

Fordham already out of his depth.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM

Should we re-route the seaplane to  
investigate?

CAPTAIN NEEDHA

It's too far gone and it needs its  
fuel for its mission. We should  
scramble air patrol and gather the  
fleet into a defensive position.

The bridge crew feels time wasting as they wait for Fordham  
to make up his mind.

ADMIRAL FORDHAM

Yes that sounds correct.

Everyone springs into action.

EXT. USS LAKE HURON - DAY

Hustle and bustle as one of the carrier's FIGHTER PLANES  
launches and more prepare to follow.

EXT. AIRSPACE ABOVE COAST - DAY

A COMBAT AIR PATROL of three fighter planes zooms across the  
sea.

INT. FIGHTER COCKPIT - DAY

The FIGHTER PILOT scans the water beneath him.

OTHER PILOT (O.S.)

(over radio)

I've got visual contact at nine  
o'clock.

FIGHTER PILOT

What is it?

OTHER PILOT (O.S.)  
(over radio)  
You're not going to believe this.

The pilot banks his plane sharply to get a look. He sees  
SUNLIGHT GLINTING OFF METAL.

EXT. ANTARCTIC COAST - DAY

As the fighter planes make a pass and then CIRCLE TO MAKE A  
LOWER PASS we get a glimpse at what they see:

It's a SUBMARINE floating at the surface.

Emblazoned on the submarine's side is a SWASTIKA along with  
the flag of the NAZI KRIEGSMARINE.

FIGHTER PILOT (O.S.)  
(over radio)  
We've made contact with the enemy.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. COASTAL FLEET LOCATION - DAY

The U-boat drifts through the water. RUST and CHIPS dot the exterior. It's derelict.

FIGHTERS SCREAM OVERHEAD as we turn and see the ENTIRETY OF THE FLEET. Every gun from deck machine guns to the giant cannons pointed at their lone enemy. The U-boat sits between them and the shore.

INT. DESTROYER MUNITION ROOM - DAY

Hectic activity as MARINES GEAR UP FOR BATTLE. Boots tied. Belts strapped. Rifles checked. Ammunition loaded.

Leading them is LIEUTENANT AZAR (20s, something to prove). He's the first to be ready and he watches as the rest of his men finish up.

His men snap to attention. The young men who haven't seen combat are easy to spot: eager, bright-eyed, ready for anything. Just like their Lieutenant.

But the veterans in the group look wary. They know what combat brings.

LT. AZAR

We're about to attempt something that has never been done: breaking into an enemy submarine. Which means we'll go down in the history books no matter how this shakes out. Let's try to get medals instead of monuments.

Azar leads them out.

EXT. DESTROYER FOREDECK - DAY

Azar and his men jog down the deck. Navy seamen watch them go by. It's like watching a football team take the field.

Azar sees the U-boat in the distance. He steels himself.

Then he and his men climb over the side of the destroyer. A LANDING CRAFT waits below.

INT. YANKTON BRIDGE - DAY

Helena takes in the controlled chaos. The room is packed with Stevens and the other CIA agents manning radio berths, consulting charts, and shouting updates.

Stevens notices Helena.

STEVENS

Get out of here.

HELENA

Give me something to analyze.

Collate. Anything.

(not quite pleading)

I can help. Let me help.

STEVENS

I'll call on you if your expertise is ever needed. For now, just make sure Agent Blake doesn't shit his diaper in fear.

(she hesitates)

That means now.

HELENA

Yes, sir.

She turns and leaves.

INT. YANKTON CORRIDOR - DAY

Helena walks against the flow of traffic as everyone rushes on their way to do their jobs.

She stops outside the OFFICER'S QUARTERS. Nobody is really paying attention to her.

She opens the door.

INT. OFFICER'S QUARTERS - DAY

Helena makes sure nobody's inside. The bunks here are nicer but the room still resembles a sardine tin.

Helena beelines for one bunk and TRUNK in particular. Emblazoned on the side: STEVENS. She pulls out her LOCK PICKING TOOLS and gets to work.

The lock POPS and she looks inside, careful not to disturb its contents too much. She rifles around until she finds DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO OPERATION HIGHTOWER.

She flips through the pages. Inside are PERSONNEL DOSSIERS with PHOTOGRAPHS clipped to them.

They're of MEN AND WOMAN OF VARIOUS AGES, but one thing ties them all together. They're all NAZI SCIENTISTS. And at the bottom of each page, the same phrase: locate and recruit.

She flips through and finds more dossiers. There's one on her. One on Frank. She stops at the page on Blake.

Off Helena, trying to absorb what she reads.

EXT. U-BOAT - DAY

Sustained lightning flashes across Lt. Azar's face.

He watches as a seaman goes at the U-boat's hatch with a CUTTING TORCH. Its giant fuel tanks balance precariously in the limited space filled with Marines ready to jump in.

The torch cuts off. Pure manpower twists the lid off the hatch with much exertion.

Each movement made echoes through the U-boat's hull like a drum. *Easily heard by anyone who might be inside.*

Once it's discarded we can see inside that there is a second hatch -- a sort of airlock.

Azar grips his rifle, frigid salt spray hides his sweating.

INT. BLAKE'S BUNK - DAY

Blake is surprised when Helena comes in.

BLAKE

What's going on out there?

HELENA

No clue. They don't want my help.

She notices the pad of automatic writing. The two words jumping out at her: HIGHTOWER. THULE.

HELENA (CONT'D)

What's that?

BLAKE

I tried to pinpoint the source of my psychic hangover.

HELENA  
Did it work?

BLAKE  
No.

HELENA  
What's Thule?

BLAKE  
It's an island discovered by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Supposed to be as north as north goes.

HELENA  
So the opposite of here.

BLAKE  
Yes. There's also the Thule Society. Nazis obsessed with the mystical origins of the Aryan race. They're into the real magical shit.

HELENA  
As north as north goes.

BLAKE  
Exactly. But what's Hightower?

HELENA  
It's the real reason we're here. Do you trust me?

BLAKE  
Of course.

HELENA  
Because I'm about to ask you to do something that is outside the chain of command.

BLAKE  
What is it?

HELENA  
I need you to put your money where your mouth is and prove this stuff is real.

EXT. U-BOAT - DAY

The INNER HATCH just needs a twist to open. Hands grip rifle stocks. The energy of the new recruits high. The fear from the combat veterans also high.

Azar motions for a young marine to open the hatch.

A MARINE VETERAN thumbs the pin of a GRENADE on his belt.

MARINE VETERAN

Lieutenant we're in a shooting gallery up here.

LT. AZAR

Continue the breach.

The young marine turns the handle and there's a HISS as pressure equalizes when the hatch seal is broken.

And for a second it's quiet. Flashlight beams fail to penetrate the darkness.

*This is gonna be easy as pie.*

LT. AZAR (CONT'D)

Is it clear?

BULLETS RIP THROUGH THE AIR. Ricocheting off steel. HEAVY MACHINE GUN FIRE lights up the darkness.

Two PRIVATES go down almost instantly.

Azar isn't prepared for this. Doesn't know what to do.

But the Marine Vet does.

His grenade tumbles down the hatch.

BOOM.

No more bullets. Only smoke.

Azar tries to recover after his first brush with death.

LT. AZAR (CONT'D)

Let's go.

A Marine clambers down the ladder as fast as he can. Disappearing into the darkness. Another follows.

INT. U-BOAT - DAY

Azar steps off the ladder. He sees a CHARRED AND MANGLED BODY next to a MACHINE GUN. Flashlights and rifle muzzles point up and down the corridor.

It's dark and damp inside. And strangely quiet. The sound of their movement is amplified and echoes throughout.

LT. AZAR

The engines are off.

YOUNG MARINE

It's a ghost ship.

MARINE VETERAN

Or a trap.

LT. AZAR

Keep your eyes peeled.

They begin their sweep.

INT. U-BOAT BRIDGE - DAY

Humidity chokes the air and condensation DRIP DRIP DRIPS off of knobs and controls.

There's not a soul to be found other than Azar and his men.

INT. U-BOAT BUNKS - DAY

Flashlights illuminate neat, empty bunks. The place is clean other than the oppressive humidity.

INT. U-BOAT ENGINE ROOM - DAY

Two Marines check the massive engines. They seem untouched.

One Marine crouches in front of a small pile of INSECT CARAPACES. But these aren't the tiny cicada shells you find in the summer - these are as big as dinner plates.

And underneath these strange shells - a BLOOD-STAINED BOOT.

*What the fuck is going on here?*



INT. U-BOAT TORPEDO ROOM - DAY

Azar runs his flashlight over stacks of torpedoes. Some show signs of RUST. Very unsafe.

LT. AZAR  
Get a team in here to dismantle  
their explosive mechanisms.

As a Marine turns to comply, there's a CLANG from one of the sealed torpedo tubes.

All rifles swing to the noise.

A Marine Private hesitatingly turns the wheel on the hatch to the torpedo tube. The metal WHINES and GROANS.

Sweat drips down the faces of everyone gathered.

The hatch swings open and the Marines grip their rifles. Ready to shoot.

Their lights illuminate TWO HANDS held out. Behind them a FACE streaked with grime and tears blinks at the brightness.

Crouched in the tube is a YOUNG GERMAN SAILOR crying hysterically. Blubbering on and on in German.

LT. AZAR (CONT'D)  
Can anyone here speak Kraut?

INT. SEAPLANE COCKPIT - DAY

Frank stands over the pilots in order to grip the radio. He tries to maintain his balance in the choppy air.

FRANK  
(into radio)  
You've got to get them out of there  
right now.

INT. OLYMPIAN BRIDGE - DAY

Fordham holds his own radio.

FRANK (O.S.)  
(over radio)  
There's no telling what they've  
been exposed to. Put those Marines  
into quarantine. They touch  
nothing. Nothing touches them.

INT. SEAPLANE COCKPIT - DAY

The turbulence gets worse.

The only reply Frank gets is STATIC.

INT. OLYMPIAN BRIDGE - DAY

STATIC squeals through the radio.

RADIO OPERATOR

We've lost signal sir. There's heavy interference.

BRIDGE PERSONNEL

The storm system is building significantly.

CAPTAIN NEEDHA

How long until it hits us?

BRIDGE PERSONNEL

Minutes.

INT. SEAPLANE - DAY

The sky rapidly darkens as turbulence grows.

SEAPLANE COPILOT

Strap yourself back in, sir.

FRANK

Of course.

SEAPLANE PILOT

Too much chop. We have to go back.

Frank can barely tell where the sky ends and the ground begins as snow whips around them.

Then he sees a pinprick of light on the horizon that grows into a soft BLUE GLOW.

FRANK

What the hell is that?

INT. BLAKE'S BUNK - DAY

Blake sits in a trance. Helena watches him concentrate.

BLAKE

I can't get a read on anything.  
Something's blocking me.

HELENA

The psychic hangover?

BLAKE

This is something new. Much worse.

HELENA

Keep trying.

INT. OLYMPIAN BRIDGE - DAY

The entire bridge staff along with the Admiral and Captain  
can see the blue glow in the distance.

It rapidly SWELLS IN INTENSITY and SIZE.

INT. SEAPLANE - DAY

The blue light is so intense it's like looking into the sun.

Then with a LOW BASS THRUM -- a WAVE OF BLUE LIGHT WASHES  
OVER THEM.

All the plane's instruments and engines fail instantly.

SEAPLANE PILOT

We've lost everything. Prepare for  
hard landing.

Frank double checks his harness. He looks over to Smith and  
Cross. Their worst fears realized.

EXT. SKIES OVER ANTARCTICA - DAY

The seaplane is buffeted by gale winds. Tossed around like a  
rag doll as it heads inevitably down...

Down...

Down...

INT. OLYMPIAN BRIDGE - DAY

Pulses of BLUE LIGHT cause everyone to shield their eyes.

One pulse after another. An unending assault on their vision.

SPARKS fly out from instruments. Smoke fills the room.

INT. BLAKE'S BUNK - DAY

BLAKE

I see...oh my God! No!

Blake CRIES OUT IN PAIN and collapses.

Then he starts THRASHING. He's in the throes of a SEIZURE.

Flailing limbs damage both his surroundings and himself. Helena hears a bone in his forearm CRUNCH as it slams into something sharp and metal.

Helena puts her leather belt into his mouth. She cradles his head in her lap as she watches his eyes roll around in their sockets. Wide but unseeing.

That's when the room itself TIPS OVER.

The floor is now a wall.

Helena and Blake tumble through the air along with anything that wasn't bolted down. A shower of clanging metal with two humans in the middle of it -- a glimpse into a deadly kaleidoscope.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE**OVER DARKNESS**

Sounds of HOWLING WIND. PANTING. GUNSHOTS. ARTILLERY.

Then: THE DISTINCTIVE SOUND OF THE DEATH CAMP TRAIN CAR DOOR.

THE SCENE TURNS WHITE:

EXT. CRASH SITE - NIGHT

Snow dances in the wind. Smoke rises and we follow a scar in the pristine snowfall to:

THE SEAPLANE. Twisted and wrecked. Belching acrid smoke.

We hold on it for a moment in anticipation.

A HAND reaches out, grabs snow. Another hand follows. Bloody.

Frank pulls himself arm over arm out of the wreckage. Each movement hurts. He bleeds from his forehead. It turns gummy as it mixes with the driving snow.

Frank struggles to his knees. Then his feet. He observes the wreckage. Taking in and analyzing all the possible dangers. Smoke. Fuel Tank. Ammunition. Structural damage.

He weighs all the variables.

He grimaces and heads back into the wreckage.

INT. SEAPLANE WRECKAGE - NIGHT

Frank searches for something, anything.

He moves a crate that fell out of its webbing. Beneath it is an ARM. It's Smith. He's dead.

Frank goes into the remains of the cockpit. Every control is busted. The Co-pilot is also dead. Pinned to his seat by a jagged piece of metal.

The Pilot groans. Half conscious as Cross struggles to untangle him from his restraints.

EXT. CRASH SITE - DAY

Frank and Cross support the Pilot between them as they stumble out of the plane.

EXT. ANTARCTIC WASTES - DAY

The three men hobble along. Hoping they're going in the right direction. Their cold-weather gear not designed for the brutality of longterm Antarctic exposure.

Meanwhile the storm gets WORSE. It's a TOTAL WHITEOUT.

Frank's not sure how long he's been going. He thinks he sees something in the distance.

They approach it. It's a military-style METAL HUT in the middle of nowhere.

Frank can't believe his eyes.

Then the WIND LESSENS and the snow dies down long enough for Frank to notice that they're surrounded.

Frank whirls around. They're encircled by white shapes. Fear mounts in him.

They're the FROZEN FIGURES FROM HIS NIGHTMARES. Bodies immobilized in grotesque positions of agony. Frank sees their faces beneath the almost-opaque ice. They're all reaching out for relief. Reaching towards the hut.

*Reaching towards Frank.*

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE